

pitches to defraud veterans of their well-earned benefits.

My state of Texas is home to nearly 1.5 million veterans, and the state of Texas operates a large network of nursing homes for veterans.

Veterans at these homes and veterans seeking treatment at medical treatment facilities may be susceptible to the in-person grifters falsely claiming that they can facilitate the provision of additional veterans benefits.

This bill would help hold scammers accountable and allow the Department of Justice to protect the integrity of veterans' benefits programs. Protecting veterans and their survivors from these types of in-person scams is particularly important since so many depend on service-connected disability payments.

As Chair of the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Subcommittee, I am focused on addressing fraud and other veterans' issues.

To that end, I ask my colleagues here today to join me as I also work on legislation to buttress veterans' courts and to make them more equitable and successful rehabilitation models.

I thank my colleague on the Judiciary Committee, Representative TED DEUTCH, for championing this bill and persisting in this effort.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and the Chair of its Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, I rise in strong support of H.R. 983, the "Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act," commonsense and necessary bipartisan legislation that establishes a new criminal offense for knowingly engaging in or attempting to engage in a scheme to defraud veterans of their hard-earned benefits.

My state of Texas is home to nearly 1.5 million veterans, and the state operates a large network of nursing homes for veterans called Texas State Veterans Homes.

Houston houses over 282,000 of these veterans, many of whom live in these state-owned nursing homes.

Veterans at these Texas nursing homes or those seeking treatment at medical facilities are susceptible to in-person scammers falsely claiming that they can facilitate the provision of additional veterans benefits when they are actually swindling veterans out of their benefits.

H.R. 983 will help hold these con artists accountable and provide an additional tool to the Department of Justice to protect the integrity of veterans' benefits programs and prevent fraud.

Protecting veterans and their survivors from these types of in-person scams is imperative since so many depend on service-connected disability payments, including those in my district in Houston.

I ask my colleagues here today to join me as I also work on legislation to strengthen veterans' courts and to make them more equitable and successful rehabilitation models.

I thank my colleague from the Judiciary Committee, Congressman DEUTCH of Florida, for championing this bill and persisting in his effort to protect our veterans with this legislation.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 983, the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act of 2021.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr.

NADLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 983, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

CRIMINAL JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT OF 2021

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2694) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for transportation and subsistence for criminal justice defendants, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2694

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT DEFENDANTS.

Section 4285 of title 18, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence—

(1) by striking "when the interests of justice would be served thereby and the United States judge or magistrate judge is satisfied, after appropriate inquiry, that the defendant is financially unable to provide the necessary transportation to appear before the required court on his own" and inserting "when the United States judge or magistrate judge is satisfied that the defendant is indigent based on appointment of counsel pursuant to section 3006A, or, after appropriate inquiry, that the defendant is financially unable to provide necessary transportation on his own";

(2) by striking "to the place where his appearance is required," and inserting "(1) to the place where each appearance is required and (2) to return to the place of the person's arrest or bona fide residence,"; and

(3) by striking "to his destination," and inserting "which includes money for both lodging and food, during travel to the person's destination and during any proceeding at which the person's appearance is required".

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAGISTRATE JUDGES TO DECIDE POSTJUDGMENT MOTIONS.

Section 3401 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the second sentence, by striking "and" after "trial, judgment,";

(B) in the second sentence, by inserting ", and rulings on all post-judgment motions" after "sentencing";

(C) in the third sentence, by striking "and" after "trial, judgment,"; and

(D) in the third sentence, by inserting ", and rulings on all post-judgment motions" after "sentencing";

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ", with the approval of a judge of the district court,"; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (i) the following:

"(j) A magistrate judge who exercises trial jurisdiction under this section, in either a petty offense case or a misdemeanor case in which the defendant has consented to a magistrate judge, may also rule on all post-judgment motions in that case, including but not limited to petitions for writs of habeas corpus, writs of coram nobis, motions to vacate a sentence under section 2255 of title 28, and motions related to mental competency under chapter 313 of this title.".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2694.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2694, the Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021, is bipartisan legislation that makes two modest but important amendments to current law, promoting efficient, effective, and fair administration of justice.

The first part of this bill concerns out-of-custody criminal defendants, particularly those who are released pending trial to live in communities that are located far from the courthouses where their cases are being heard.

Most Federal criminal defendants are detained pending trial. The U.S. Marshals Service is responsible for housing and transporting them to court hearings, including trial. Under current law, the court may order the marshals to provide funds for a criminal defendant who is released pending trial but cannot afford the cost of travel to the location of the courthouse for required court proceedings.

However, defendants must fund their own way back home, and defendants in this position are not able to receive financial support from the marshals for subsistence, such as lodging and meals. For an indigent defendant, these costs are sometimes insurmountable.

For years, Federal courts have struggled with how to assist indigent defendants when they find themselves in these difficult situations. Unfortunately, the courts' efforts have come up against the text of the statute.

This bill would authorize courts, in the interest of justice, to order the U.S. marshals to cover roundtrip travel and subsistence for defendants who must attend court hearings but who cannot afford to pay this on their own. The Judicial Conference of the United States has urged us to correct this grave unfairness, and I am pleased to see that we are finally doing so with this bill.

The second part of this bill, concerning Federal magistrate judges, is

also supported by the Judicial Conference. Magistrate judges have trial jurisdiction over certain misdemeanors, except for Class A misdemeanors, for which the maximum sentence is up to 1 year in custody. With a defendant's consent, however, a magistrate judge may exercise trial jurisdiction over a case involving a Class A misdemeanor. Magistrate judges frequently do so and often hear Class A misdemeanor cases all the way through judgment and sentencing.

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Under current law, a magistrate judge's jurisdiction ends after judgment is entered in a misdemeanor case, and post-judgment jurisdiction reverts to the district court. Indeed, magistrate judges are not authorized to hear post-judgment motions, such as motions to vacate a sentence, even though they are the ones who handled the entire matter at the trial level and are best equipped to hear such post-judgment motions.

Among other things, this bill would authorize a magistrate judge to hear post-judgment motions in misdemeanor cases in which he or she exercised trial jurisdiction. This amendment clearly improves judicial economy and makes perfect sense.

This is a straightforward and bipartisan measure that will help our criminal justice system operate in a more effective and fair manner. I thank Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. ROY for sponsoring this legislation, and I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2694, the Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021.

This bill strengthens existing laws that provide for the transportation and subsistence for indigent criminal defendants when they are brought to court proceedings.

H.R. 2694 also allows a magistrate judge to finally decide post-judgment motions in a misdemeanor case where that magistrate judge was the judge who handled the underlying case.

This provision will improve the efficiency of our court system by allowing our courts to manage caseloads in a more economical manner.

I thank the bipartisan sponsors of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2694, the Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021.

This legislation reflects another step in our ongoing work commitment to

ensure that justice is administered fairly and equally in this country.

The first part of the bill relates to our Federal pretrial system. I thank Mr. NADLER, our chairman; and, of course, the author of this bill, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

As we work on changes to our pretrial system, we must also make certain that indigent defendants who are released on bail pending trial, who live far away from the courthouse in which they must appear, can make it to the court for required appearances.

As the chair of the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Subcommittee, it is our committee that deals with the criminal justice system and the system that should be fair to victim and alleged perpetrator. That means that individuals who are defendants and are indigent must be able to get to the courthouse in order to assure a fair justice system.

For out-of-custody defendants, the financial and emotional toll of making required court appearances is considerable. It can mean taking time off from sorely needed jobs, sometimes without compensation, or shifting scarce household resources to make it to court on time and to avoid rearrest for failure to appear.

These challenges are heightened for defendants who have cases pending in districts that are far from where they live. This distance can also lead to unnecessary pretrial detention, as courts wrestle with how to ensure that defendants who live out of their districts can make required court appearances. This is a commonsense legislative initiative.

H.R. 2694 gives courts the ability to direct the U.S. marshals to provide for roundtrip travel and subsistence for indigent defendants or those who cannot otherwise afford those costs to attend court during the pendency of their cases.

This is an important step in our work on Federal pretrial reform, and, as I said, common sense in fairness of the system.

The second part of the bill promotes judicial economy by allowing magistrate judges to oversee the entirety of the cases in which they exercised trial jurisdiction. This administrative step is important for our overburdened Federal judiciary and our efforts to fairly administer justice to all individuals. That is certainly the responsibility of those of us on the House Judiciary Committee.

I thank Representative JEFFRIES for his work on this bill, which I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2694, the Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021. This legislation reflects another step in our ongoing work and commitment to ensure that justice is administered fairly and equally in this country.

The first part of the bill relates to our federal pretrial system.

As we work on changes to our pretrial system, we must also make certain that indigent

defendants who are released on bail pending trial—but live far away from the courthouse in which they must appear—can make it to court for required appearances.

For out-of-custody defendants, the financial and emotional toll of making required court appearances is considerable. It can mean missing time off from sorely needed jobs, sometimes without compensation, or shifting scarce household resources to make it to court on time and to avoid re-arrest for failure to appear.

These challenges are heightened for defendants who have cases pending in districts that are far from where they live. This distance can also lead to unnecessary pretrial detention, as courts wrestle with how to ensure that defendants who live out of their districts can make required court appearances.

H.R. 2694 gives courts the ability to direct the U.S. Marshals to provide for roundtrip travel and subsistence for indigent defendants—or those who cannot otherwise afford these costs—to attend court during the pendency of their cases. This is an important step in our work on federal pretrial reform.

The second part of the bill promotes judicial economy by allowing magistrate judges to oversee the entirety of the cases in which they exercise trial jurisdiction. This administrative step is important for our overburdened federal judiciary, and our efforts to fairly administer justice to all individuals.

I thank Representative JEFFRIES for his work on this bill, which I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting today.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to improve the administration of justice through our court system by supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021 would make several critical changes to improve the operation of our Federal criminal justice system.

I commend Representatives HAKEEM JEFFRIES and CHIP ROY for introducing the legislation, as well as their bipartisan cosponsors for their leadership in bringing these important issues to our attention.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2694, the Criminal Judicial Administration Act of 2021. This legislation reflects another step in our ongoing work and commitment to ensure that justice is administered fairly and equally in this country.

The first part of the bill relates to our federal pretrial system.

As we work on changes to our pretrial system, we must also make certain that indigent defendants who are released on bail pending trial—but live far away from the courthouse in which they must appear—can make it to court for required appearances.

For out-of-custody defendants, the financial and emotional toll of making required court appearances is considerable. It can mean missing time off from sorely needed jobs, sometimes without compensation, or shifting scarce

household resources to make it to court on time and to avoid re-arrest for failure to appear.

These challenges are heightened for defendants who have cases pending in districts that are far from where they live. This distance can also lead to unnecessary pretrial detention, as courts wrestle with how to ensure that defendants who live out of their districts can make required court appearances.

H.R. 2694 gives courts the ability to direct the U.S. Marshals to provide for roundtrip travel and subsistence for indigent defendants—or those who cannot otherwise afford these costs—to attend court during the pendency of their cases. This is an important step in our work on federal pretrial reform.

The second part of the bill promotes judicial economy by allowing magistrate judges to oversee the entirety of the cases in which they exercise trial jurisdiction. This administrative step is important for our overburdened federal judiciary, and our efforts to fairly administer justice to all individuals.

I thank Representative JEFFRIES for his work on this bill, which I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting today.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, everyone—regardless of their financial situation—should be able to fully and fairly defend themselves in court.

Unfortunately, however, many defendants who live very far away from the court trying their case cannot afford to get to and from their court appearances to defend themselves. The costs can be simply insurmountable.

This situation often makes poverty the difference between winning and losing a case, regardless of the facts.

That is not justice.

This bill helps make courtroom justice available to everyone by ensuring that travel and lodging costs are covered for low-income defendants.

This will help ensure justice for all defendants, not just those wealthy enough to afford it.

This bill also makes courtrooms more effective. It allows magistrate judges to rule on certain post-judgment issues that they previously could not adjudicate on cases that they handled at the trial level.

This is common sense. If a case has been with a judge through the entirety of the trial, that judge knows the case best and should be able to handle post-conviction issues.

As a former litigator, I believe this bill will help ensure that justice prevails and make our overburdened court system more efficient, and I thank Congressman JEFFRIES for introducing this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2694.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

ELDER ABUSE PROTECTION ACT OF 2021

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2922) to amend the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act to authorize the Elder Justice Initiative, to require that online resources of such initiative are made available in Spanish, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2922

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Elder Abuse Protection Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. ELDER JUSTICE INITIATIVE.

Section 101(b) of the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act (34 U.S.C. 21711(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) ELDER JUSTICE INITIATIVE.—

“(1) PERMANENT INITIATIVE.—The Attorney General shall establish an Elder Justice Initiative to coordinate criminal enforcement and public engagement efforts to combat elder abuse, neglect, and financial fraud and scams that target elders, and to support and coordinate the efforts of the Elder Justice Coordinator designated under subsection (a).

“(2) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ELDER JUSTICE COORDINATOR.—The Attorney General shall designate an Elder Justice Coordinator within the Department of Justice who, in addition to any other responsibilities, shall be responsible for—

“(A) coordinating and supporting the law enforcement efforts and policy activities as the head of the Elder Justice Initiative for the Department of Justice on elder justice issues;

“(B) evaluating training models to determine best practices and creating or compiling and making publicly available replication guides and training materials for law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges, emergency responders, individuals working in victim services, adult protective services, social services, and public safety, medical personnel, mental health personnel, financial services personnel, and any other individuals whose work may bring them in contact with elder abuse regarding how to—

“(i) conduct investigations in elder abuse cases;

“(ii) address evidentiary issues and other legal issues; and

“(iii) appropriately assess, respond to, and interact with victims and witnesses in elder abuse cases, including in administrative, civil, and criminal judicial proceedings; and

“(C) carrying out such other duties as the Attorney General determines necessary in connection with enhancing the understanding, prevention, and detection of, and response to, elder abuse.

“(3) ONLINE PUBLIC RESOURCES.—The Elder Justice Initiative shall maintain and publish on the internet, information aimed at protecting elders from fraudulent schemes and contain resources aimed at preventing elder abuse.

“(4) TELEPHONE HOTLINE.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Elder Justice Coordinator and the Office of Victims of Crime, shall establish a national elder fraud telephone hotline to provide support to victims and resources to help victims, including referrals to federal, local and state law enforcement where appropriate.

“(5) TRIBAL CONSULTATION.—The Elder Justice Coordinator shall provide recommendations to the Office of Tribal Justice on a yearly basis on how to address elder abuse and elder fraud that takes place on federally recognized tribal reservations.

“(6) LEGAL AID.—The Elder Justice Coordinator shall consult with components of the Department of Justice to promote the provision of civil legal aid to victims of elder abuse and elder fraud.

“(7) SPANISH LANGUAGE RESOURCES.—The Attorney General shall ensure that Elder Justice Initiative online resources are available in Spanish and link linguistically appropriate resources to inform Spanish-speaking elders of Federal and State resources to combat fraud and abuse that targets the elderly, to include—

“(A) Spanish-language resources and links that help report instances of elder fraud and abuse to State and local law enforcement; and

“(B) resources that help prevent financial exploitation of elders.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2922.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2922, the bipartisan Elder Abuse Protection Act of 2021.

This bill would make permanent the Department of Justice's Elder Justice Initiative and would assign the initiative a number of critical responsibilities that would protect vulnerable seniors from fraud and abuse.

The bill includes critical elder abuse preventive measures, including an obligation to post elder abuse prevention resources online, to coordinate with the Office of Tribal Justice to address elder fraud on reservations, and to publish Spanish-language elder fraud and abuse materials. Additionally, the bill would authorize the Department's operation of the National Elder Fraud Hotline.

These changes are a testament to the importance this Congress places on elder justice and its continued commitment to address emerging elder fraud issues.

Sadly, tens of thousands of elderly Americans are abused and exploited every day. By one estimate, American seniors lose at least \$2.9 billion each year due to financial abuse and exploitation. The U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau similarly estimates that elder Americans suffer an average annual loss of \$34,200 due to fraud.

Tragically, instances of elder fraud and abuse have only gone up. From 2013 to 2017, financial scams and other crimes targeting older Americans quadrupled. Elderly individuals are vulnerable to abuse on account of a myriad of factors, with social isolation and mental impairment, such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease, playing outsized roles.